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Housing Regional Goals Debated

By Charles Cooper

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is calling on its member cities to prepare for a growth of more than 700,000 dwelling units in the next eight years.

The draft regional housing needs allocation plan is now being circulated. It is intended to carry the region through to 2014, and to guide cities in the preparation of their own housing elements.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) survey is mandated by the state, and is enforceable through possible state action if cities fail to provide zoning capacity for a range of housing needs identified by the survey.

Cities are now in the cycle during which they can challenge the numbers, and many are expected to do so.

Arcadia, for example, will be asked to provide potential for 2,130 dwelling units, 881 of them low and very low income.

Monrovia has been assigned a goal of 562 additional units, 228 of them very low and low, and Pasadena 2,844 units, 1,153 of them low and very low income.

Sierra Madre is facing a call for 138 units, 58 of them low and very low income. Even Bradbury has an assigned a number, 35 units, 15 of them low and very low.

SCAG represents six counties. The largest burden is on Los Angeles County, at 287,669 units, with Riverside County assigned a number of 173,188.

The RHNA numbers must be addressed in housing elements, with a zoning plan in place to allow for the suggested growth. Cities like Arcadia and Pasadena that are essentially built out and with low vacancy will still be required to take their share of the population growth.